

October 26/95

MINUTES

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

7:30 P.M.

Present: Father Mark Buckley, Kathy Krentz, Barbara McKerrow, Alphonse Casteels, Sue Sullivan, Tom Redegeld, Bernadette Murray

Father Buckley opened the meeting with a prayer. He then notified the Council of the letter of resignation which had been handed in from the Chairperson, Judy Goosens in which she had cited that she was resigning for personal reasons.

The position of Chairperson being vacant, the members of the Parish Council voted by secret ballot for the person they chose to replace Mrs. Goosens. After three attempts and as many tie votes, it was finally decided by the four vote that Sue Sullivan be chosen to fill the vacancy.

Kathy Krentz provided an update regarding the Childrens' Liturgy noting that the attendance was increasing dramatically and the program was proving very successful. It was decided that the Parish provide Advent Calendars for the children as part of the celebrations leading into Christmas.

Father Mark detailed plans for the Annual Advent Service which would begin at 4:00 p.m. with a prayer service to be following by a meal at 5:00 p.m.

Also noted was the upcoming Confirmation ceremony scheduled for Saturday, November 11, 1995 at which 45 children will be receiving the sacrament.

Father Mark discussed some political matters which have been ongoing with the Haldimand Township municipal office. The parking lot in front of the church will be receiving top priority as a municipal works project for early Spring of 1996. The work to make this area safer for children and vehicular traffic was to have been done in Fall of 1995, but because of unforeseen senior government cutbacks, the money will not be available until next year. Father Mark told the Council that land dedication will be needed from the Church to the municipality in order that the area be redesigned. He noted that this dedication of land could be accomplished at the same time as another matter is being resolved, that being the long-standing drainage problem experienced by the Jensen family who are next door neighbours to St. Mary's School. Both Father Mark and a representative of the Roman Catholic Separate School Board will meet with Council to discuss possible solutions.

The question arose concerning the ordering of hymn books for the Choir and it was noted that the books are very expensive at a cost of approximately \$45.00 each. Father Mark mentioned that with the discount which he is entitled to we may be able to get a reduction in that price if they are ordered during his appointment here. A book drive may be a possible way to raise funds, also the dedication of individual books in honour of deceased members of the parish. As well, other sources of funding could be the Catholic Womens' League or money raised by holding bingos. The general consensus of Council was that the Choir should be supported in the provision of at least a number of books for the Choir members with the rest to be provided by fundraising.

### New Business

Tom Redegeld asked about the final estimated cost for renovation of the rectory and if all the work was completed. Father Mark informed him that a bedroom upstairs is being repaired as the roof had fallen in due to water damage from a leaking roof. Mr. Redegeld asked if it was possible for him to have a financial report provided to the Council every six months. Father Mark said that this would not be feasible as the time and labour of Accountant Rebecca McVeigh are donated and for such financial accounting to be provided she would have to be recompensed.

This issue led into a discussion initiated by Tom Redegeld concerning enquiries which had been addressed to him as a parish Council member. He told the Council that many parishioners had concerns and that there was some confusion over the issue of Father Mark owning and operating two stores. The parishioners concerns were based on the fact that they perceived that being a parish priest is a full-time position and that they understood that priests are not permitted to own a business. As well, it was noted that a new secretary had been hired to work 25 hours per week in the rectory and some parishioners questioned whether this expense was necessary.

Father Buckley explained that he had sought and had been given permission by the Bishop to open the shops. He reasons for doing so were two-fold. Primarily, there was the consideration that he must look to his own future to provide a means of livelihood upon his retirement as the future for diocesan priests was not good as the contributions to pensions were dropping off each year. As well, he told Council that he needed some outside interest to help balance his life and to serve the parish. He stated that not all of the parish is against his involvement, and in fact it was perceived to be a good thing in that it provided jobs for the community.

Tom Redegeld stated that he understood that a priest is entitled to a private life and that it was not unusual for priests to have investments. He said that given that he is on parish Council he has been asked for information and he would like to be able to answer people's enquiries or bring it to Father Mark's attention so that he could speak with those who had questions.

Father Mark agreed that, given the circumstances and the possibility of confusions and rumour, it would be a good idea for the questions to be asked and answers given in an open forum. He told Council that he had decided to hold an open Parish Meeting at which he would make himself available to answer questions about Church business and also to explain his position in regard to owing businesses of his own. He suggested that the meeting could be held on Friday, December 1, 1995 following Benediction.

Some discussion took place outlining the plans for the arrival of the National Evangelization Team (NET) on December 1 and their ten-day stay. Possible plans included a weekend retreat for the students and the NET team as well as the planning of a three night mid-week retreat for the adult community to be held in the Church. The community will be asked this year, as in the past, to billet the students in groups of two for their stay in our community.

The annual Catholic Womens' League Roast Beef Dinner is to be held on Sunday, November 5, 1995. It was decided after some discussion with the Social Committee that the next dance will be held in early February, 1996 (possibly a Valentine's Dance).

It was decided that the next meeting would be planning session to decide a format for the public meeting scheduled for December 1, 1995. The planning meeting will be held on Thursday, November 23, 1995 at 7:30 p.m., following Mass.

It was moved by Alphonse Casteels, and seconded by Tom Redegeld that the meeting be adjourned at 9:45 p.m. CARRIED.